

# Connections

October 2007



by Sally Oxenhandler

## New Tools Give Motorists the Driving Edge

With the push of a computer button, MoDOT Director Pete Rahn sent an announcement to an electronic message board along Interstate 70 near Columbia on Sept. 13 to launch the department's new traveler information initiative, Driving Edge.

Along with unveiling the new electronic message boards, Director Rahn also presented the department's new online traveler information map and announced around-the-clock customer service to help Missouri travelers get where they're going quickly and safely.

The resources are all part of MoDOT's new Driving Edge initiative, an umbrella program that provides highway information before you travel, along the way and around the clock.

"The Driving Edge gives motorists all the information they need for a safe and uneventful trip as they head out on our highways," Director Rahn said. "These cutting edge tools help travelers plan their trip and get updated information so they can avoid delays and frustration."

Traveler information tools included under the Driving Edge:

### Electronic Message Boards

Forty-eight electronic message boards have been installed along Interstates 70 and 44 to inform motorists about road closings, accidents, hazardous road conditions and even Amber Alerts on missing children.

### Traveler Information Map

MoDOT's new Traveler Information Map shows travelers what lies ahead before they leave home. Located on our Web site, [www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org), the map gives work zone information, highway closings, weather-related road conditions and incidents on major routes on one easy-to-use site.

### 24/7 Customer Service

To enhance customer service, the de-

partment's toll-free telephone number – 888-ASK-MODOT – is now answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week around the state.

### Traffic Management Centers

Located in St. Louis, Kansas City and Springfield, traffic management centers monitor the roadways, respond to congestion and incidents and deliver real-time information to travelers through the media, Web sites, electronic message signs and highway advisory radio.

### E-Updates

Up-to-the minute transportation information is provided via e-mail.

### Emergency Reference Markers

Emergency Reference Markers are located every two-tenths of a mile on Missouri interstates to help pinpoint exact locations in case of emergencies.



Capt. Dale Schmidt of the Missouri State Highway Patrol joined Director Pete Rahn in unveiling MoDOT's new Driving Edge program, which provides informational tools to help travelers get where they're going quickly and safely.

### Map My Trip

This Web-based travel information tool is now available to help motorists find alternate routes around highway and ramp closures in St. Louis, especially along the Interstate 64 reconstruction project.

### St. Louis 511

Motorists receive around-the-clock, real-time traffic information by calling 511 in the St. Louis area.

More information on the Driving Edge can be found at [www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org).

## Passage of House Bill 2 Allows Safe & Sound to Move Ahead

by Bob Brendel

MoDOT's ambitious plan to improve more than 800 of the state's worst bridges is moving full speed ahead following passage of House Bill 2 during a special session of the Missouri Legislature in late August.

Gov. Matt Blunt signed the bill during a series of ceremonies held Sept. 5-6 and staged on six of the program's bridges in Districts 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10.

The bill authored by Rep. Neal St. Onge, chairman of the House Transportation Committee, eases performance, payment and proposal bond requirements associated with the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program. Without this change, no contractors would have been able to obtain the required bonds and the program would have been stopped from moving forward.



Gov. Blunt speaks at a Safe & Sound bill signing ceremony in Greene Co.

Gov. Blunt and Director Pete Rahn announced the plan in September 2006, and a dedicated MoDOT team headed by

Project Director Ken Warbritton has been shepherding the procurement process ever since.

"The Safe and Sound Bridge Program will benefit Missourians in every region of the state by providing safer and better bridges," Gov. Matt Blunt said. "Our bridge improvement plan will repair or replace more than 800 Missouri bridges with an innovative and original approach to provide faster results. The plan we are enacting in Missouri has been touted as a national model to improve our transportation infrastructure."

"I want to thank Governor Blunt for signing this legislation and for making this project a priority in special session," Sen. Bill Stouffer said. "This Safe and Sound

*Continued on page 4*

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### All Hands on Deck

Blunt ceremoniously signs the Safe & Sound bill at a District 1 bridge

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### Ready to Rumble

District 3 installs a new centerline rumble strip on Route 54

9



### Round, Round, Get Around

District 4 opens a new roundabout just in time for school to start

11



### And the Winner is ...

St. Louis hosts exciting Tour of Missouri finale

13



### Washed Out

District 8 Maintenance crews handle "flood" of repairs



# MoDOT and Partners Enter Into a Workforce Partnering Agreement for kcICON Project

by Jennifer Benefield

Following in the footsteps of another design-build project across the state, MoDOT and its Kansas City area roundtable partners agreed to a Workforce Utilization Partnering Agreement that will increase the number of socially and economically disadvantaged individuals trained for work on the kcICON project.

Roundtable partners include the Federal Highway Administration, Mid-America Regional Council, contractors, labor management, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training programs and community groups.

“MoDOT has dedicated up to \$1.25 million for workforce development,” said kcICON Project Director Brian Kidwell. “We are extremely pleased that everyone has agreed on a plan that will increase the number of trained workers for the kcICON project and future highway construction projects.”

A kcICON Workforce Advisory Committee will be established to identify



Program Delivery Director Dave Nichols (standing) works with Civil External Rights Administrator Lester Woods, Conference of Minority and Transportation Officials President Julie Cunningham and kcICON Project Director Brian Kidwell to complete the agreement.

pre-apprenticeship training programs, recommend these programs for funding and monitor them for accountability and producing trainees ready for highway construction apprenticeships.

“We are excited to have a project in Kansas City that will link training and employment of minorities, women and

economically disadvantaged individuals,” said MoDOT External Civil Rights Administrator Lester Woods. “It is a ‘new day’ at MoDOT, and we are thankful to all those stakeholders who have been involved.”

The \$245 million kcICON project will reconstruct/

rehabilitate about four miles of Interstate 29/35, improve outdated interchanges and construct a new Missouri River bridge(s).

The Workforce Utilization Plan Partnering Agreement and additional information is available on the project’s Web site: [www.kcicon.org](http://www.kcicon.org).

## MoDOT Opens Show Me You Care Series

by Kristi Jamison

In the spirit of the in-state competitive tradition born out of the 1985 World Series, more popularly known as the “I-70 Series,” MoDOT will launch a show-down of its own in October called the Missouri Roadway Show Me You Care Series. That’s the theme of MoDOT’s 2008 Charitable Campaign, which runs Oct. 1 – 15.

“I was very proud of how MoDOT employees showed their care and concern for others through last year’s Charitable Campaign,” said Chief Financial Officer Roberta Broeker. “We raised more money and more employees participated. I believe we will hit another home run this year.



“The Show Me You Care Series is a fun and clever idea that taps into the famous highway corridor connection to ‘pitch’ a friendlier competition that is sure to raise even more money for charities this year.”

The “series” will pit district against district, with the winner being determined by percentage of participation. The following districts will face off in their

## Five Things You Can Tell Your Neighbors About Roadeo

by Jeff Briggs

After a few years off, MoDOT’s Winter Skills Roadeo got under way once again earlier this year. All employees who operate equipment during winter storms have participated in this training competition in every district, with operators rated on a variety of skills. The highest scores from each district are headed to the statewide Roadeo finals Oct. 18 at the State Fairgrounds in Sedalia.

Here are five things you may not know about MoDOT’s Roadeo:

1. About 3,000 of our people take part – everyone who’s eligible to drive a snowplow in winter.
2. Operators are tested on a variety of skills needed to operate a snowplow truck and a loader, including backing into narrow spaces for loading, plowing in a straight line and through obstacles, clearing curbs and interchanges and other challenges.
3. MoDOT invests more than \$27 million a year to keep the highways clear of snow and ice. This training helps us make the most of that investment.
4. When winter weather hits, 2,000 snowplows, dump trucks and other equipment are standing by to keep the roads clear.
5. The statewide winner will receive a \$40 gift card and the runner up will receive a \$20 gift card.

own uniquely named series:

District 1 vs. District 3 - U.S. 36 Show Me You Care Series  
District 4 vs. District 6 - I-70 Show Me You Care Series  
District 2 vs. District 5 - U.S. 63 Show Me You Care Series  
District 7 vs. District 8 - I-44 Show Me You Care Series  
District 9 vs. District 10 - U.S. 60 Show Me You Care Series

The winning district of each series will be awarded a special road sign (left) for proud display. If the winning district also has the largest cash contributions, a dollar sign will be affixed to the sign.

The Central Office divisions will enter their own friendly competition – the Whitton Expressway Show Me You Care Series – between the System Facilitation Team, System Delivery Team (minus the districts) and the Organizational Support Team.

Employees of the winning wheel team will be treated to hand delivered cookies sometime during late November by the leaders of the two losing wheels.

## Doing Business with MoDOT Just Got “e”asier Again

by Bob Brendel

When contractors submit their bids in the October letting, they will do so based on plans they received through MoDOT’s new Electronic Plans Room, another milestone in MoDOT’s efforts to become more heavily involved in e-business.

During July and August, MoDOT, contractors and materials suppliers tested the Web-based service. Now it will serve as the sole source for plans, meaning that MoDOT will no longer print and distribute project plans.

“Contractors and suppliers will get a more efficient system by which to bid our jobs,” said MoDOT bid and contract services engineer Travis Koestner. “And MoDOT stands to realize significant savings in the area of postage, paper, equipment leases and maintenance agreements.” Total annual savings for MoDOT is estimated to be more than \$200,000 per year.

The Electronic Plans Room is operated and maintained by a third-party vendor – INDOX Services of St. Louis. It looks and feels like a part of MoDOT’s Web site though it is actually hosted by INDOX.

The electronic plans room will allow anyone to view, print or download plans for free, or a registered vendor can order a printed set of plans from INDOX, much as they have in the past through the Plans Room in Jefferson City. Even the general public will now have access to project plans by visiting <http://modot.indoxservices.com/>.

“Up until now the public could only view our plans by special request or at a public hearing,” Koestner said. “But now, if they are interested, they can view the same plans the contractor will use to build a project. It adds to the transparency of MoDOT.”

CADD Services Engineer George Kopp says the move to the electronic plans room is just the next step in MoDOT’s e-business efforts.

“We are continuing our scheduled implementation of ProjectWise (a secure document management system). Just because we have gone to the Electronic Plans Room, plans don’t need to be electronically submitted. Those that aren’t will be scanned and forwarded to INDOX. Electronic document management with ProjectWise will help internal workflow for the life of a project and will result in smaller file size for plans posted on the electronic plans room. Smaller file size will make the use of the electronic plans more efficient.”

Since January, MoDOT has been using another independent vendor, BidX.com, to conduct electronic bidding. “It has been well received and is working well,” Koestner says. An average of 60 percent of all bids received have been submitted electronically.

If you have questions regarding the status of any facet of MoDOT’s e-business efforts, contact Kopp ([george.kopp@modot.mo.gov](mailto:george.kopp@modot.mo.gov)) or Koestner ([travis.koestner@modot.mo.gov](mailto:travis.koestner@modot.mo.gov)).



# The Show Was On at the Highway Gardens

by Melissa Black

Visitors took in the show at the Transportation Exposition Center in the Highway Gardens at this year’s Missouri State Fair, themed “It’s Show Time,” which ran Aug. 9-19 in Sedalia.

“This year’s state fair was a huge success for MoDOT in terms of the people we educated about Missouri transportation,” said Don Hillis, director of System Management. “We had lots of great information and visitors had a great time learning about what we do.”

Thirteen different displays offered information on a variety of topics to educate and entertain visitors from around the state about Missouri transportation such as seat belt and booster seat usage; the effects of aging on driving; the Safe & Sound program; our Better Roads, Brighter Future program; Amtrak; Adopt-A-Highway; guard cable and transportation-related games for kids to play in our KidZone.

On Aug. 10, visitors were also able to participate in several special games to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Adopt-A-Highway program in Missouri. From the Rubbish Race, to the Litter Pledge, the Fishing Frenzy, the Coloring Contest, as well as the membership drive and free cookies, kids and adults

alike learned about how to make a difference in cleaning up our state with Adopt-A-Highway and No MOre Trash!

The fourth annual scavenger hunt in the Highway Gardens also offered hundreds of kids the opportunity to have fun, learn about transportation and littering in Missouri, and get the chance to win a brand new bike. The lucky winner was 12-year-old Evanna Waller from Jefferson City, who was awarded her new ride at her home in September.

“We do make a difference to everyone who travels in Missouri in one way or another,” Hillis said. “The fair is one great way to reach many of these folks and let them know what we’re doing with their tax dollars and how they’re benefiting.”



Scavenger hunt winner Evanna Waller shows off her new bike.

## Great Performances Net Great Rewards 2nd Quarter Performance Plus Results

Hundreds of MoDOT employees are reaping the benefits of helping the department increase productivity and save money through the Performance Plus program. In the second quarter, beginning April 1 and ending June 30, MoDOT paid out nearly \$200,000 in incentives to employees that helped save more than \$70 million in construction costs or project scoping and estimating.

The Construction Cost Savings Incentive rewards employees for achieving a final construction cost of one percent above the contract award amount (or less) on projects in the STIP.

### Construction Cost Savings Incentive Results:

- 18 project offices had an overrun of 1 percent or less. In the qualifying project offices, there were 32 projects that met the target.
- Seven of 10 districts (1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10) achieved the target.
- 239 employees will be receiving the payout, costing approximately \$98,620.
- A total savings amount of \$7,442,086.60 was realized! After removing the incentives paid out (\$500 to employees in the successful project offices or \$250 to employees in the successful project offices in

other districts), we ended up with a net savings of \$7,343,466.60.

The following 18 project offices achieved the goal: Cameron, Macon, Hannibal, Kansas City – E. Truman Road, Riverside, Kansas City – Stadium, Sedalia, Columbia, Hampton, St. Clair, St. Peters, Neosho, Nevada, Buffalo, Van Buren, Rolla, Poplar Bluff and Jackson.

The Project Scoping and Estimating Incentive rewards districts that achieve a quarterly project award cost that is less than or equal to one percent over the total STIP construction estimates.

### Project Scoping and Estimating Incentive Results:

- A total of nine districts (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10) met the target of all awarded projects coming in less than or equal to 1 percent over the total STIP construction estimates.
- Out of the nine districts, 72.5 percent (87 out of 120) of the projects met the target.
- Approximately 396 employees will be receiving the payout, costing an estimated \$98,124.
- A total savings amount of \$62,759,064 was realized. After removing the incentives paid out (a \$250 incentive), we ended up with a net savings of \$62,660,940.

## For Your Benefit

## 2008 Medical Plan Information – What You Need To Know

The Plan Board of Trustees, working with the commission, MoDOT and MSHP, decided to increase medical premiums for almost all subscribers effective Jan. 1, 2008. This decision was based on increased costs for both medical and prescription drugs. Active subscribers have not seen a premium increase for eight years, and for non-active subscribers it has been four years. Also during the last eight years, the majority of our plan members have seen very little change to their benefits. The commission, MoDOT and MSHP continue to pay a large share of the premium costs for our plan members and will share in the increased cost for 2008.

Here is some important information about open enrollment and benefit changes that will become effective Jan. 1, 2008.

- Employees who are currently enrolled and don’t need to make any changes to their benefit plan do not have to do anything. Their current coverage will continue.
- Active employees and their spouses and dependent children who are not currently enrolled are eligible to en-

roll during open enrollment in October. The age for eligible dependents has increased from 23 to 25.

- Active employees wanting to enroll themselves and/or new dependents must:
  - complete an A-570 Enrollment/Change form, which may be accessed on the Employee Benefits’ Web site at [www.modot.mo.gov/newsandinfo/benefits.htm](http://www.modot.mo.gov/newsandinfo/benefits.htm) under “General Information,” or by contacting your respective insurance representative; and
  - ensure the enrollment form is received in the Employee Benefits office, 1913 Williams Street, P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102, no later than Oct. 31, 2007.
- The October open enrollment period does not include retirees, surviving spouses, vested employees, work-related or long-term disability recipients or COBRA participants.

### Non-Medicare Subscribers

- Medical deductible will be \$350 per calendar year per plan participant, with a family maximum of \$1,050 per calendar year.

- Office visit co-payments will be \$20 for each in-network office visit charge. Out-of-network office visits are applied to your deductible and co-insurance.
- Out-of-pocket maximum for in-network covered services per participant per calendar year will be \$825, with a family maximum per calendar year of \$2,475.
- Out-of-pocket maximum for out-of-network covered services per participant per calendar year will be \$1,650, with a family maximum of \$4,950.
- Deductible for prescription drugs is \$100 per plan participant per calendar year.
- Preventive benefits will not change for 2008. Non-Medicare subscribers and enrolled spouses will be allotted \$350 for preventive services. Non-Medicare dependent children age six and over will be allotted \$200 per calendar year for preventive services and dependent children under the age of six will receive 100 percent coverage for all well-child care visits.
- Non-Medicare subscribers will receive a new medical card for 2008,

but will not receive a new prescription card for 2008 unless making a plan change, such as becoming Medicare eligible or adding new dependent(s).

### Medicare Subscribers

- Medical deductible will be \$350 per plan participant per calendar year.
- Services not covered by Medicare, which are covered by our plan, will be paid at 80 percent with a maximum out-of-pocket of \$1,650 per Medicare member per calendar year. This does not include your costs for prescription drugs.
- Deductible for prescription drugs is \$100 per plan participant per calendar year.
- The Medicare catastrophic coinsurance level for prescription drugs per individual is \$4,050 out-of-pocket expense. Once you have reached this level, your cost will be reduced to the greater of 5 percent coinsurance or \$2.25 co-payment for generic drugs and \$5.60 co-payment for brand drugs on Medicare’s formulary.
- Medicare subscribers will not receive a new medical card or a new prescription card for 2008.

Spotlight on Diversity

MoDOT values diversity because we believe in the power of our differences. It’s those very differences that established the United States of America as the great nation it is today.

America has been and always will be a place for people around the world to come and realize their full potential. In fact our nation was built primarily by people who migrated from other places around the world, bringing with them their unique culture and customs. Over time these differences were blended together to create the American culture.

As more people migrate to America in this generation, we can expect that new cultural diversities will continue to enhance our nation. We gain our greatest strength through the convergence of the best that the world has to offer.

Today, most Americans don’t necessarily know or appreciate where our language and customs come from or how other cultures have helped shape our own. At MoDOT we are blessed to have people from many different cultures and backgrounds that make up our workforce.

As part of the Employee Advisory Committee’s function, we will use this new column often in *Connections* as another means to assist management in cultivating a culturally diverse environment at MoDOT. I encourage you to check out this new section as the EAC highlights a different culture and how it is helping to add value to MoDOT’s work environment.

Thank you,  
  
Randy Morris  
EAC Chairperson

Never Made It Campaign Portrays Consequences to Teens

by Laura Holloway

The Never Made It teen safety belt campaign launched Sept. 17, encouraging teens to buckle up and arrive alive. Sponsored by the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety, the campaign runs



through October 21 and conveys the potential consequences that teens may face when choosing not to wear their seat belts.

Teens are an important group to reach with a seat belt message. Missouri’s teen safety belt usage rate is significantly lower than other Missourians.

The campaign uses realistic, chilling images of teens that “never made it” to significant milestones in their lives, or even day-to-day activities they may take for granted. It addresses common excuses teens may use when not buckling up and the consequences of those choices.

Several medial elements work together to reach young drivers, including print, television and radio advertisements, along with promotional events and an online advertising presence on popular teen web sites. The fall portion of the campaign complements the efforts under way for the Battle of the Belt challenge, where Missouri high schools compete against each other for the highest seat belt use.

For more information about the Never Made It campaign or teen safety belt use, visit [www.saveMOLives.com](http://www.saveMOLives.com)

MoDOT Develops Pandemic Influenza Emergency Response Plan

by Sally Oxenhandler

Feeling a little achy? Are the sniffles coming on? Maybe you’ve got the flu. But what if it’s not the typical kind of flu? What if it’s a new strain that circles the globe very quickly and for which there’s no vaccine? What if 30-40 percent of MoDOT’s workforce is struck by this highly contagious illness and can’t come to work?

Those are the questions a MoDOT task force has been trying to answer as they develop an emergency plan to respond to a pandemic – which means it’s everywhere - flu outbreak. Although there is no pandemic influenza anywhere in the world right now, health experts say flu pandemics tend to occur in cycles, and we are due for another outbreak.

What can you do to prepare? The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services recommends you:

- Learn more about influenza. The health department’s Web site – [www.dhss.mo.gov/PandemicInfluenza](http://www.dhss.mo.gov/PandemicInfluenza) – offers a wealth of information.
- Plan how to respond.
- Protect yourself and your family.
  - Wash hands frequently with soap and water, for at least 15-20 seconds.
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough and sneeze and dispose of it properly.
  - Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or the crook of your arm if you don’t have a tissue.

- Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing. Use soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Stay at home if you are sick.

MoDOT has developed a comprehensive plan for dealing with pandemic influenza, which can be found on the intranet at [wwwi](http://wwwi). From a public standpoint, our primary responsibility will be to keep roads and bridges open and traffic flowing to ensure emergency and supply vehicles are able to reach their destinations without delays. We’ll do this by redistributing and cross-training staff and creating written instructions and procedures for those functions so they can be carried out by others.

Should pandemic influenza hit, we will share information with employees through e-mail, the Internet and intranet and employee newsletters, including district newsletters and *Connections*. In general:

- Employees will be expected to report to work or call in to explain their absences.
- No special paid leave will be available unless the governor’s office or the legislature makes special provisions.
- As with other illnesses and injuries, employees should build up their sick leave for use when they are sick or injured. Accrued annual leave or comp time can also be used to cover these absences.

October Service Anniversaries

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| <b>35 Years</b>       |     |
| Michael C. Peck       | D8  |
| Wendell W. Moore      | D10 |
| <b>30 Years</b>       |     |
| Johnny R. Fry         | D3  |
| Ray A. Meeks          | D4  |
| Gary R. Kemna         | D6  |
| Mike W. Sheets        | D7  |
| Howard C. Blake       | D10 |
| Roger G. Moyers       | D10 |
| <b>25 Years</b>       |     |
| Gary E. Dryden        | D1  |
| Roger P. Roof         | D2  |
| Raymond E. Hollenbeck | D3  |
| Roger L. Hoover       | D4  |
| <b>20 Years</b>       |     |
| David K. Oliver       | D2  |
| Bradley L. Brunk      | D4  |
| Vernon H. Koch        | D4  |
| John C. VanWinkle     | D4  |
| Robert D. Garner      | D6  |
| Cathy L. Bay          | D7  |
| Ronald D. Branstine   | D8  |
| Thomas E. Allen       | CO  |
| Gerald E. Foster      | CO  |
| Christopher A. Mabrey | CO  |
| Ronald L. Scott       | CO  |

|                     |     |
|---------------------|-----|
| Allen C. Thoenen    | CO  |
| Myrna R. Tucker     | CO  |
| <b>15 Years</b>     |     |
| Bret E. Davidson    | D2  |
| Eldon G. Jones      | D2  |
| Wanda S. Brummett   | D3  |
| Carolyn S. Schutte  | D3  |
| Richard Garcia      | D4  |
| Timothy J. Holman   | D4  |
| Mary M. Rackers     | D5  |
| Michael G. Smith    | D5  |
| Jeffrey A. Verslues | D5  |
| Connie K. Wilson    | D8  |
| Teia J. Burks       | D10 |
| Lynn W. Smith       | D10 |
| Scott W. Breeding   | CO  |
| David P. Ordway     | CO  |
| Cathy M. Trigg      | CO  |
| <b>10 Years</b>     |     |
| David L. Lybarger   | D2  |
| Martin D. Lincoln   | D3  |
| Patricia Q. Breece  | D6  |
| Eric S. Burlbaw     | D6  |
| Glen H. Youngblood  | D6  |
| Marsha A. Lovan     | D9  |
| Phyllis J. Murray   | D9  |
| North R. Mosby      | D10 |
| Shelley Cooper      | CO  |

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| Christy L. Evers   | CO  |
| Lynn M. Ferguson   | CO  |
| R. Todd Miller     | CO  |
| Randall J. Silvey  | CO  |
| <b>5 Years</b>     |     |
| Joe T. Gibson      | D1  |
| Shawn P. Biegel    | D2  |
| Bobby D. O’Neal    | D2  |
| Larry W. Nichols   | D3  |
| Brandon H. Block   | D4  |
| Diana M. Gough     | D4  |
| Jesse L. Green     | D4  |
| George W. Parker   | D4  |
| Katina D. Davis    | D6  |
| Mary A. Huskey     | D6  |
| Sheila D. Leopold  | D6  |
| Jennifer A. Riegel | D6  |
| Lorri A. Cole      | D7  |
| Ronnie D. Sawyers  | D8  |
| Jason M. Harmon    | D9  |
| John Z. Noble      | D9  |
| Craig A. Duncan    | D10 |
| Heather D. Ahrens  | CO  |
| Kenneth W. Gartner | CO  |
| Stacy M. Kaiser    | CO  |
| Yona Leimkuehler   | CO  |
| Lisa D. Orf        | CO  |
| Deborah S. Rickard | CO  |
| Matthew W. Talken  | CO  |

In Memoriam

|                         |     |           |
|-------------------------|-----|-----------|
| <b>Retirees</b>         |     |           |
| Emmett Lee Smith        | D4  | August 14 |
| Billy “Bill” D. Hammond | D7  | August 15 |
| Irvin H. Schindler      | CO  | August 18 |
| Charles D. Hawkins      | D10 | August 19 |

August Retirements

| Name                | Location | Years of Service |
|---------------------|----------|------------------|
| James Teufel        | D2       | 13               |
| Thomas Fleming      | D4       | 23               |
| Leslie Miller       | D4       | 24               |
| Charles Cox         | D6       | 28               |
| Marion Jones        | D6       | 28               |
| Norman Nesser       | D6       | 33               |
| Randall Workman     | D8       | 17               |
| Marvin Davis        | D9       | 28               |
| Glen Spencer        | D9       | 15               |
| Thomas Hinson       | D10      | 35               |
| Judy Curran         | CO       | 20               |
| Christopher Schmidt | CO       | 22               |
| David DeWitt        | CO       | 32               |
| Jerome Hirtz        | CO       | 33               |





# Ring Named General Services Director

by Kristi Jamison

The timing just felt right when Beth Ring joined MoDOT in February 2005 as director of Risk Management. As she saw it then, MoDOT was poised to do some pretty exciting things with a new director and new money coming in from the passage of Amendment 3. And she was right.

In just two-and-a-half years, the Risk Management staff and all of MoDOT did accomplish some pretty exciting things. But seeing a new challenge and the opportunity for change, Ring stepped into a new position on Aug. 1 as General Services director, following Dave DeWitt’s retirement.

During her tenure in Risk Management, the division oversaw a significant reduction in injuries. In fact on Ring’s last day, the Risk Management Division received a Pathfinder Award from the the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials’ Standing Committee on Quality for the significant reduction in workdays lost to injuries or accidents between 2005 and 2006 (see story below).

“What a privilege it was to lead such a talented and experienced Risk Management team,” said Ring. “I am really proud of the significant results we were able to achieve across the state in such a short timeframe.”

MoDOT has reduced the number of workdays lost to accidents by another 55 percent this year.

Leaving the Risk Management team was no easy decision for Ring. “When I first heard Dave was retiring, I considered



applying for the job,” Ring said. “Making the decision turned out to be very difficult for me because I really loved what I was doing in Risk Management.

“However, I just couldn’t stop thinking about it, so I finally took some time out to write down all the things I loved about being the director of Risk Management. It boiled down to the fact that I loved making a difference and having a huge impact on MoDOT as a whole.”

Realizing she would still be able to achieve the same satisfaction in General Services, she applied for the position and got it.

“Now I’m looking forward to meeting the challenge of doing more with less in the General Services Division,” Ring said.

In the first few months as General Services director, Ring has spent most of her time getting to know the management staff and the functions of their units. Her immediate focus will be to bring General Services, Central Office and District management together collectively to prioritize the high value issues General Services addresses.

## MoDOT Receives Pathfinder Award

by Sally Oxenhandler

MoDOT recently earned AASHTO’s highest awards for quality – the Pathfinder award.

Since January 2006, we have reduced the number of workdays employees were off with injuries by 69 percent. The number of workdays lost to accidents fell by 64 percent. This drop

in injuries and accidents reduced our workers’ compensation costs by \$7 million, which we have been able to invest in transportation improvements.

In addition, injured employees now are given tasks they can handle temporarily while they recuperate, allowing them to return to work faster.

for more info

Connections Editor  
Phone  
E-mail  
  
105 W. Capitol Avenue  
P.O. Box 270  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Kristi Jamison  
573.526.2482  
kristine.jamison@modot.mo.gov

# Missouri Hot to Spot Bad Brakes

by DeAnne Bonnot

In today’s world, the fairy tale character Goldilocks would have the right credentials for a career in quality assurance. In fact she would be well suited for a career in brake testing at MoDOT. You see, since brake assemblies that are

“With this tool, we can quickly decide which trucks need a more thorough brake check. At the same time, we’re able to send equipment with normal heat signatures down the road a bit more quickly. That will save them time



As Mark Brooks holds the thermal imager, Sandy Thomas interprets heat pictures of a dump truck wheel and brake assembly during recent Motor Carrier Services investigator training.

too hot or too cold indicate a potential problem, her sensitivity to temperatures would make her a natural at spotting failures before they occur.

That’s the idea behind MoDOT’s purchase of thermal imaging brake testers. When aiming an imager at a set of wheels, an investigator sees areas that are significantly warmer or cooler than their surroundings. It’s quick, non-invasive and can detect problems before they become evident to drivers and mechanics.

and money,” said Mark Biesemeyer of MoDOT Motor Carrier Services.

MoDOT managers are impressed with the imagers. So much so, they plan to use the cameras to check the many dump trucks the department uses to haul materials and plow snow.

“Good brakes are vital for the safety of MoDOT employees and everyone who shares our highways,” said Don Hillis, MoDOT System Management director. “This tool will help us keep our fleet in good repair.”

# Charitable Campaign Kick-off Cookout

Commission Secretary Pam Harlan, MHTC Commissioner Jim Anderson and Government Relations Director Jay Wunderlich served Angela Sutton and many other Central Office employees at a cookout on Sept. 21. The event, along

with two others this month, kick off MoDOT’s Charitable Campaign fundraising efforts taking place Oct. 1 – 15.



Wes Farris



# D1

## Northwest

### Becoming Law

by M. Elaine Justus

It may not have been a “dark and stormy night,” but the cloud cover on Sept. 5 looked a little like a stage setting for “The Tempest.” We were lucky, though, and the rain that had been threatening us all morning never materialized. Gov. Matt Blunt, Sen. Bill Stouffer and Rep. Neal St. Onge arrived precisely on schedule, along with various members of the media,

to witness the signing of House Bill 2 into law.

The overpass chosen for the signing ceremony is one of our most heavily traveled bridges and, as you can see in the photo below, the many multi-colored patches make it a worthy candidate for repair or replacement. Originally built in 1962, the bridge has outlived its original life expectancy.



Holly Lea Murphy

The local press turned out in force for Gov. Matt Blunt’s recent trip to the Northwest District.

### The MS Bike Tour-2007

by M. Elaine Justus

Who says MoDOT isn’t multi-modal? Certainly not the employees of the Northwest District. Every year three of our people volunteer to participate in the grueling 150+ mile ride to raise funds and awareness for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

This year, Transportation Project Designer Joyce Reynolds had a minor mishap with her recumbent bike and only completed 156 miles of the 188 mile tour, but she assures us that both her and her bicycle will be just fine.



Transportation Project Designer Joyce Reynolds has been riding in the tour for 11 years.

Senior Highway Designer Jack Smith, who is riding for his eighth year, completed the full 188 miles.

Our third participant, Maintenance Supervisor Roger Wittler, wasn’t able to make this year’s Kansas City MS Bike Tour, though. The rumor we heard was the date coincided with his 25th

wedding anniversary and his lovely bride thought a cruise to Alaska was a more fitting way to celebrate the occasion. Not willing to ruin his (almost) perfect record, Roger has already made arrangements to “make up” the ride by participating in the Topeka, Kan. MS Bike Tour later this year.



Senior Highway Designer Jack Smith has been riding in the tour for eight years.



Maintenance Supervisor Roger Wittler has been riding in the tour for over 15 years, but didn’t make the Missouri ride this year.

### That Was Then, This is Now

by M. Elaine Justus

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The Highway Department did things a little differently in 1954. Improving the road surface was often accomplished with road graders and oil.

The Missouri Department of Transportation has been in business now almost 87 years (or four score and seven years ago, as Abraham Lincoln would say). Even though many things have remained the same, such as our commitment to building and maintaining good roads, a few things have definitely changed.

This construction season, we are getting an “up close and personal” look at one new way of doing business. Although this is probably old news to much of the rest of the state, hot-in-place recycling is certainly an eye-opener to us.

We have been watching this process on Interstate 35 (near the Iowa border) recently, and have been very impressed.

In case you haven’t had the opportunity to see it, it’s a moving operation of

multiple vehicles progressing slowly along the pavement. The front equipment heats the existing pavement, the second machine “chews” up the heated material from the pavement, “sucks” it up into a hamper where it is heated even more until it melts. Additional oil is then added to the mixture, and the newly melted, reconstituted “old asphalt” is then placed back onto the

road surface where rollers smooth it back into a good driving surface with a 1-3/4 inch cap of new asphalt. Watching them inch down the road, with smoke belching everywhere reminds us of the old days when Barnum & Bailey would come to town in huge caravans pulled by elephants. There may not be calliopes playing, but it sure looks like a circus parade.



We’re still working hard to keep the driving surfaces of our roads smooth and level. This summer, MoDOT has worked with contractors on Interstate 35 near the Iowa state line to improve the road with “hot-in-place” recycling.

#### for more info

Community Relations Manager  
Phone  
E-mail

M. Elaine Justus  
816.387.2353  
margaret.justus@modot.mo.gov

3602 North Belt Highway  
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399



# D2

## North Central

### Governor Blunt Visits the District, Signs Legislation

by Tammy Wallace

With the passage of HB2 the Safe & Sound Bridge Program moves forward. Gov. Matt Blunt spent two days during the first week in September traveling

the Safe & Sound Program. Traveling with the governor were Sen. Bill Stouffer and Rep. Neal St. Onge, whose leadership in the Senate



The Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee Sen. Bill Stouffer speaks to the crowd, while Gov. Matt Blunt signs HB2.

the state to look at a few of those 800 bridges that will be improved. A one-lane bridge on Route 156 east of LaPlata in District 2 was one of six stops made by the governor, where he signed copies of the bill and spoke about the significant impact Safe & Sound will have on Missouri. Impacts not only on our minor road system, where these bridges are located, but also on the economy as the program will bring jobs to the state. The one-lane bridge on Route 156 is currently rated at 4 on a rating scale of 9 to 0, yet carries 884 vehicles per day, many of those being large trucks. This is the type of bridge that is perfect for

and House helped get this legislation brought into the special session and to rally the legislators to pass the bill. MoDOT's Chief Engineer Kevin Keith also traveled with the governor to attend these ceremonies. We are anxiously awaiting the bids in November from the two teams who are participating in this very unique and innovative program. A special thank you to Scott Miller, Kevin Ross, Stan Weber, Laverne Stull and Neva Atterbery from Atlanta maintenance and Keith Porter from Macon for their assistance in providing traffic control for the event.

David Oliver/MoDOT



Stacy Armstrong talks with the Carrollton crew who did such a great job during No MORE Trash! Bash 2007. Several members of the district management team also visited with the crew.

### The Carrollton Clean Up

by Tammy Wallace

The Carrollton maintenance crew didn't have to eat their lunch out of a sack or box one beautiful day this August. They were treated to a full course catered meal by Roadside Management Supervisor Stacy Armstrong for the outstanding job they did during the 2007 No MORE Trash! Bash. The crew picked up trash in Carroll County during the month of April, and when all the bags were added together, the crews realized they had picked up 70 bags of trash! The Carrollton crew picked up the most trash of any maintenance crew in District 2, earning them the catered lunch and visit by Stacy and Senior System Management Technician Margie Mansager. Stacy talked with the crew, thanking them for a job well done and discussing the importance of keeping our roadsides clean. Senior Traffic Technician Donna Martin organized the luncheon and is responsible for administering the Adopt-A-Highway Program in the district. Not only did the Carrollton crew take the No MORE Trash challenge, 29 of our District 2 Adopt-A-Highway groups also picked up a total of 485 bags of trash in April. Thanks to the Carrollton Crew for doing such a great job during the Bash and to Stacy and Margie for their visit and recognition. Thanks



Each crew member received a "goodie cup" from Stacy and Margie.

also to our Adopt-A-Highway groups, all maintenance crews who pick up and dispose of the bags the groups leave behind all year long, and to Donna for working with the program. The Carrollton crew: Doug White, David Deitch, Rick McCumber, Donald Standley, Fred Goetting, David Lybarger, Eugene Oser, Jimmy Watts, Bobby O'Neal, Shawn Epperson and Charles Ahnefeld.

### Welcome Kevin James

by Tammy Wallace

Kevin James has joined the District 2 Team as Assistant District Engineer. Kevin started his career at MoDOT in 1996 at the District 3 office in Hannibal, after graduating from the University of Missouri - Columbia as a traffic

studies engineer. He has held various positions in District 3, including Traffic Operations Engineer and, most recently, North Area Engineer. As a MoDOT employee, Kevin has enjoyed problem solving and working

with others to implement solutions. He thinks its great when a concept or idea that he was part of creating becomes a reality. When asked what interested him in the Assistant District Engineer position, Kevin said, "As Assistant DE I can be even more involved in improving our transportation system. In this district I will learn about another part of the state and work with a different group of people. I always like learning new things, and am happy to be a part of the District 2 team."

Kevin is particularly looking forward to taking what he has learned in previous jobs and applying that experience to solve new problems. He thinks his



Marisa Brown/MoDOT

Assistant District Engineer Kevin James.

biggest challenge will be to become more familiar with the District 2 staff and transportation system.

### for more info

Community Relations Manager  
Phone  
E-mail  
Route 63  
P.O. Box 8  
Macon, MO 63552  
Tammy Wallace  
660.385.8209  
tammy.wallace@modot.mo.gov



# D3

## Northeast

### Don't Cross the Line

You have heard of driving by the seat of your pants? Motorists traveling on Route 54 in Audrain and Pike counties could feel a “rumble” in the seat if they cross the centerline. In August, the Northeast District installed its first centerline rumble strips on Route 54 from Louisiana to Vandalia. Modeled after the shoulder rumble strips, centerline rumble strips alert drivers when they have crossed over into the path of oncoming traffic. According to MoDOT Intermediate Traffic Studies

Specialist Brian Untiedt, centerline rumble strips are an effective safety tool used to address head-on, sideswipe and crossing-the-centerline crashes on two-lane, rural highways due to driver inattention, error or fatigue. Route 79 in Lincoln County will have centerline rumble strips installed next year during a resurfacing project, and MoDOT will continue to identify other highways that could benefit from this safety feature.



Dennis “Hoot” Hollingsworth, construction inspector, checks out the first centerline rumble strips installed in the Northeast District on Route 54.

### Digi-signs Sweeping the County!

To continue improving the Route 61 corridor throughout Lincoln County, MoDOT has installed digital speed limit signs to remind drivers to obey the speed limits. “The new signs will help remind motorists of the new speed limit on this stretch of road,” said Jason Shafer, maintenance and traffic engineer.

In addition, new stop signs feature light emitting diode

(LED) to bring more attention to an intersection. These have been placed at three intersections in Lincoln County.



Warren Brehm and Mike Haggerty install the new digital speed limit signs and the LED stop signs in Lincoln County.

### for more info

Community Relations Manager Marisa Brown  
Phone 573.248.2502  
E-mail marisa.brown@modot.mo.gov  
  
Route 61 South  
P.O. Box 1067  
Hannibal, MO 63401

## Celebrating Another Milestone

### Next Section of Route 36 Project Awarded

The next section of the 52-mile four-lane project on Route 36 has been awarded under estimate, and this was just “icing on the cake” according to MoDOT Transportation Project Manager Rolla Rentz who oversaw the contract. What Rolla is referring to is the fact that this section was let two months earlier than expected because the plans were completed quickly. “We pooled our resources and got it done,” Rolla said.

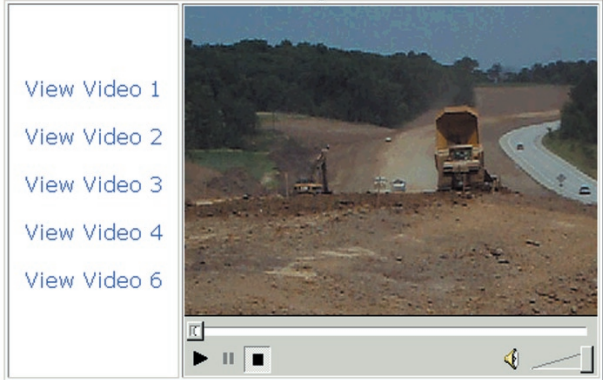
To celebrate the award, the Shelbina Chamber of Commerce and MoDOT hosted a celebration and update last month. Working with elected and local officials, as well as the I-72/36 Corridor members, District Engineer Paula Gough shared progress along the corridor. More than 100 people participated in the event.

Route 36 is expected to be a four-lane highway by 2010, and even though

much of the focus in northeast Missouri has been on the four-lane project, the North Central District has been resurfacing and repairing bridges in preparation for the expansion. Both districts have combined efforts in areas of maintenance, planning, project management, community relations, right of way and various other departments to work more efficiently, not only on Route 36, but other projects throughout northern Missouri.



“It’s heading our way!” Paula told attendees at a recent event in Shelbina.



Pull up a chair, grab a cup of coffee, click a few times on the computer, and you’ll feel like you’re sitting in a construction zone! MoDOT’s Northeast District is featuring online video footage of the Route 36 four-lane project. Next up ... Avenue of the Saints final section of construction!

## Look Out Old Man Winter!



Above: Robert Roseman from the New Florence crew, concentrates on the truck inspection portion of the test.

“Bring it on!” is the attitude of our snow-fighting crews! The Roadeo has helped prepare MoDOT maintenance forces for the winter. “This was a huge team effort,” said Northeast District Coordinator Kenny Hollocher. From maintenance superintendents and supervisors, to the business and benefits staff, many contributed to the success of the event.



This participant does well at the loader drop station.



# D4

## Kansas City Area

### Todd Creek Bridge Completed One Month Early

by Kerri Lewis

The new Todd Creek Bridge on Route 92 in Platte County is finished one month ahead of schedule. Construction, which began in June, wrapped up on Aug. 28, reopening the road to motorists. With safety being the number one priority, MoDOT closed the route to ensure the bridge and road be rebuilt in the same location, reduce the amount of work required, reduce impacts to adjacent property owners and provide taxpayer value through significant project cost savings.

This \$1.9 million project improves the 0.4 miles of Route 92 in Platte

County. The new bridge over Todd Creek replaces the original 150-foot long bridge built in 1932 and carries approximately 4,000 vehicles per day. The new bridge, approximately 190 feet long, was constructed in the same location and raised in elevation to prevent frequent flooding. Other safety features include pavement widening, grading, paving and drainage work. City officials from both Smithville and Platte City, and the Platte County Commission participated in a ribbon-cutting event to signify the opening of the new bridge.



Kerri Lewis

From left to right: Platte County Second District Commissioner Jim Plunkett, Platte County Presiding Commissioner Betty Knight, MoDOT TPD Scott Nett, MoDOT Area Engineer Kirsten Munck, Platte City Mayor Dave Brooks and Smithville City Administrator Gerry Vernon.

### Tour of Missouri Makes Debut in Kansas City

by Joel Blobaum

District 4 hosted the debut of the Tour of Missouri on Sept. 11, when 120 of the world's finest professional cyclists covered an 85-mile circuit course through the Kansas City region. And just like their counterparts across the state, MoDOT's District 4 forces worked behind the scenes to ensure a safe and enjoyable event for participants, motorists and spectators.

Large crowds gathered at the start/finish line on the Country Club Plaza for the 1 p.m. start and the mid-after-

noon finish. An enthusiastic group in Parkville greeted the Tour twice as it rolled through the Platte County community on its way north and south. Missouri Highway Patrol estimates put the crowd at 40,000 for the entire route.

Platte County Maintenance Superintendent Ed Nichols and Area Engineer Kirsten Munck reported no major problems along the route through Clay and Platte counties, other than

### New Roundabout Open at Route VV in Pleasant Hill

by Kerri Lewis

Just days before students returned to school, MoDOT and the city of Pleasant Hill opened a new roundabout at Route VV and Lexington Road. The completion of this project will accommodate traffic to and from the new Pleasant Hill Intermediate School. The \$806,844 project to build the roundabout, sidewalks and retaining walls is part of a \$3.5 million contract

to include adding turn lanes, storm drains, curb, gutter, and sidewalks to Route 7 in Pleasant Hill, and installing traffic signals at Route 7 and Route 150.

Several people stopped by to partake in a special ribbon cutting celebration, signifying the opening of the newest safety addition to the Pleasant Hill transportation system.



Steve Porter

Left to right, Senior Construction Inspector Aydogan Girgin, Pleasant Hill Intermediate School Principal Becky Gallagher, Resident Engineer Jon Voss, Transportation Project Designer Debbie Huffman, Pleasant Hill Mayor Terry Wilson, 122nd District Rep. Mike McGhee, Area Engineer Mark Stock, Maintenance Superintendent Pat Calhoun, Pleasant Hill City Administrator Mark Randall and Transportation Project Manager Allan Ludiker.

a quick cleanup of some spilled concrete in Platte City.

On Wednesday, Sept. 12, the Tour departed Clinton in Henry County at 11 a.m. and quickly moved into St. Clair County via Route 13 and Route

58. As one of the local MoDOT workers observed at 1 p.m. that day, "You can't even tell the Tour was here. Everything went off without any trouble at all."

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Kerri Lewis

120 cyclists began the Tour of Missouri bicycle race at the Kansas City Country Club Plaza on Sept. 11.

### for more info

Community Relations Manager Joel Blobaum  
Phone 816.622.6327  
E-mail joel.blobaum@modot.mo.gov

600 NE Colbern Road  
Lee's Summit, MO 64068



# D5

## Central

### Locals Get Tour of Route 5 Project in Camden County

It might not be easy for the public to understand the scale of a project where over seven million cubic yards of material will be excavated to shape a new highway. To help local officials and media comprehend what a project of that size looks like, the district led about 25 people through the new Route 5 in Camden County on August 24.

It's been over a year since crews from McAninch Corporation started working for MoDOT to move all that dirt and rock to create seven miles of new Route 5. Crews have excavated about six million cubic yards of

material so far, but they've also made headway on two interchanges and four bridges that are part of the project.

Huge culverts have been built throughout the project area to accommodate drainage through and around the new highway. The tour group viewed two culverts near the new Camdenton High School, at the south end of the project. At the area where the Route 54 and the new Route 5 will intersect, the tour group watched as crews worked on ramps and the recently paved outer road adjacent to the highway. At one vantage point the



Shaun Schmitz

One of two tour vans passes one of the many dump trucks hauling material at the new Route 5.



Shaun Schmitz

A reporter from Ozark TV captures video from the Lake Road 5-89 bridge north of Camdenton.

group could watch a long line of dump trucks haul material back and forth down the new highway, building up the rock base for the new driving lanes.

This is the second tour the district has offered to city and county officials,

state representatives, local transportation council members and media. The tours have provided them with a close-up view of highway construction that helps us communicate our progress to the public.

### Tour of Missouri Travels Through Mid-MO



Kristin Gerber

Customer Service Representative Jennifer Ranabargar and Senior Community Relations Specialist Holly Dentner ensure the safety of young cyclists by handing out bike helmets at the Tour of Missouri Health and Wellness Expo in Jefferson City on Sept. 15. The helmets were provided through MoDOT's bike/ped program.



Alan Trampe

Tour of Missouri racers take a curve on Route J in Callaway County.



Alan Trampe

Students from New Bloomfield Elementary School in Callaway County line the street as the Tour of Missouri cyclists ride through on Sept. 14.

### for more info

Community Relations Manager Kristin Gerber  
Phone 573.522.3375  
E-mail kristin.gerber@modot.mo.gov  
  
1511 Missouri Boulevard  
P.O. Box 718  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

### District Retirements



Senior Construction Technician Curtis Wren retired Oct. 1 after 18 years with MoDOT. Curtis worked at the Ashland maintenance building

as a crew worker for three years before moving to the Columbia Project Office as a construction technician.

Curtis says working at MoDOT has been a pleasure, where he learned something new every day. Even after moving to the project office he helped out during the winter weather season, plowing snow when needed. He said he will miss his coworkers but he's looking forward to his new job as an inspector with the city of Columbia Public Works department.



Mark Embrey, senior maintenance worker at the Columbia Maintenance Building, will retire effective Nov. 1 after 30 years of service.

Mark started at MoDOT as a structural steel painter with Central Office Bridge. He worked briefly as a maintenance worker at the Harrisburg building, but spent almost 23 years at the Columbia maintenance building.

Mark plans to spend his retirement taking care of all the things he's been putting off the last few years, including working on his 73-acre farm near Columbia and restoring some old cars. He plans to hunt, fish and spend lots of time with his family.

### Sharpening Their Skills

District maintenance employees tested their snowplow expertise at the 2007 Winter Skills Roadeo, held Sept. 5, 6, 12, and 13 in Sedalia. Employees had to complete a written exam, a pre-trip vehicle inspection, and a rigorous driving skills course that assessed their abilities to operate the winter weather equipment.



Dawn Haslag

The exercise shown here simulates loading salt into a dump truck.



# D6

St. Louis Area

## Innovative Device Safely Places Cones in Zones

MoDOT Employees Develop Safer, Cheaper, More Effective ‘Solutions at Work’

by Kristi Jamison

Jared Housewright and Perry Bruckerhoff, maintenance workers at MoDOT’s St. Clair Maintenance Facility, have worked dangerously close to traffic setting up or tearing down work zones for the past several years.

“When I’m out there putting down cones to set up a work zone,” Housewright said, “I often worry about my safety as cars and trucks whiz past just a few feet away.”

Their experiences led them and their co-workers to design a much safer system to set up or remove a work zone. “We were able to get an automatic cone setter when another district no longer needed it,” Housewright said. “Then we went to work, trying several times to figure out a way to attach it to our conveyor system, so it could automatically place cones.”

By adding a conveyor system to the automatic cone setter, workers are no longer near the traffic. The innovation, known as the CONEveyor, has now been adopted through a new pilot program at MoDOT. The new initiative, Solutions At Work, provides a way to collect, evaluate, document and communicate new ideas from employees that solve a problem, enhance safety, save taxpayer dollars and help increase efficiency. The program also recognizes employees for approved best practices.

“MoDOT employees are consistently finding new ways to provide the best value to our customers by improving our work processes and making wise use of our resources,” said MoDOT Director Pete Rahn. “Solutions At Work ensures that these great innovations are recognized and filtered through the department, so that everyone can benefit.”



Phillip Walka

**Perry Bruckerhoff, intermediate maintenance worker, operates the CONEveyor, an innovative device that safely places cones in zones**

MoDOT employees have already submitted more than 100 innovations since the pilot program began in November. At least 19 have been adopted, primarily pertaining to improving internal processes like sharing electronic transportation plans or design work between districts.

Innovations are evaluated using a point system to rate originality; time and money savings; impact on MoDOT’s Tangible Results; and whether it can be transferred to another work unit, department or state agency. Based on

the points assigned, employees may receive awards ranging from a thank you note to time off to cash.

If you ask Housewright, Bruckerhoff and their co-workers who will benefit from the CONEveyor, a much safer work environment is the ultimate reward.

## District 6 Contributes To Tour of Missouri’s Success

by Kara Price

The world’s greatest bicyclist professionals sped through District 6 for the first Tour of Missouri professional cycling race. MoDOT worked effectively to make sure the roads were safe for the cyclists, motorists and spectators.



Larry Doelling

Maintenance workers closed the west-bound Route 40/Interstate 64 Ramp to Forest Park Avenue/Grand Boulevard, which is one of six ramps closed for the St. Louis City circuit race.

The district’s teamwork and dedication contributed to a strong finish for the competitive bike race.

Part of the tour took place on state routes in District 6 during the weekend of Sept. 15 and 16. Closures on the affected routes occurred a few minutes ahead of the racers, and the roads were opened as soon as the race passed through each city. Temporary closures were kept to a minimum occurring mostly in the afternoon in Franklin and St. Charles counties on Saturday, Sept. 15, and in St. Louis City on Sunday, Sept. 16. MoDOT made sure the routes were well marked and provided motorists with detailed information in advance about the roads that were affected.



Kara Price

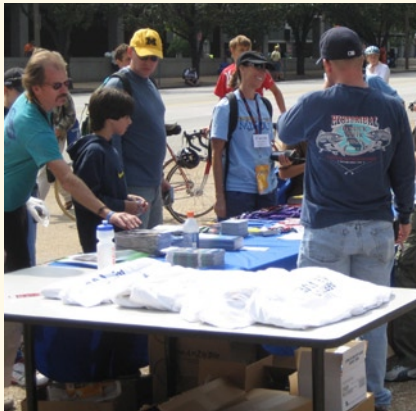
**The world’s greatest bicycle professionals sped through downtown Washington in Franklin County near its historic train station and Missouri Riverfront.**

“Our employees delivered what customers expect and were a key component in helping make this event a success,” said District 6 Engineer Ed Hassinger. “The district did an extraordinary job of helping show off Missouri’s highway system, and their hard work is sincerely appreciated.”

MoDOT hosted a fan zone at the St. Louis City circuit race Sept. 16 near the finish line on the corner of Market Street and 15th Street. Sidewalk chalk

was available for children to decorate the street with team support and bicycle/vehicle safety messages. District 6 employees also handed out information on its projects and many travel information tools while answering fellow bike fans’ questions regarding the roads.

For featured coverage of the Tour of Missouri race, visit [www.tourofmissouri.com](http://www.tourofmissouri.com).



David Henroid

**MoDOT hosted a fan zone at the St. Louis City circuit race near the finish line on the corner of Market Street and 15th Street.**

### for more info

Community Relations  
Phone  
E-mail

1590 Woodlake Drive  
Chesterfield, MO 63017

Marie Elliott  
314.340.4524  
[yvonne.elliott@modot.mo.gov](mailto:yvonne.elliott@modot.mo.gov)



# D7

## Southwest

### 'Thank God Almighty, It's Completed at Last!'

#### Route 71 Ribbon Cutting Brings Together Residents, Dignitaries

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

McDonald County residents and local and state dignitaries gathered together Aug. 30 to officially open the newly four-laned section of Route 71 south of Pineville. This completed the four lane project from Interstate 44 to Arkansas, which started over 10 years ago.

The ceremony was held on a bluff high above the new road.

"It's a little off the beaten path," said District Engineer Becky Baltz of the ceremony location, "but we chose the location for a reason. First, it shows off the beauty of the highway and McDonald County, plus it brings us full-circle from when we stood here a little over two years ago to break ground and share our excitement about building this last section of four lane on Route 71."

Speakers at the ceremony included U.S. Sen. Kit Bond and U.S. Rep. Roy



**U.S. Rep. Roy Blunt, Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission member Rudolph E. Farber, Arkansas Highway Commission Chairman Jonathan Barnett and District Engineer Becky Baltz cut the ribbon.**

Blunt, who were both instrumental in securing federal funding toward construction of the four lanes from I-44 to the Arkansas state line. Chief Engineer Kevin Keith, State Rep. Marilyn Ruestman, State Sen. Jack

Goodman, Arkansas State Highway Commission Chairman Jonathan Barnett, Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission Chairman James Anderson and Missouri Highways and Transportation

Commission member Rudolph E. Farber were on-hand to speak as well.

Chairman Anderson summed up the feelings of the 200-plus people in the crowd with a variation of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech: "Completed at last, completed at last! Thank God Almighty, it's completed at last!"



**U.S. Sen. Kit Bond speaks to the crowd of over 200.**

### District Employees Earn Incentive Award

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

Some employees in District 7 received an extra \$250 in their paychecks the last pay period in September. Employees under Maintenance Superintendents Tim Houdyshell, Bob Cannon and Randy Cook earned the award for meeting all three targets in the Performance Plus Injury Reduction Incentive.

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The incentive is designed to improve employee safety and reduce work-related injuries and workers' compensation costs. The savings in these costs pay for the incentives.

The eligible District 7 employees earned \$125 each because the entire work group reduced their OSHA-recordable accidents by 60 percent from February-June 2007. They also each earned \$75 for reducing the district's total workers' compensation claims by 25 percent or more compared to the same time last year. And they

earned \$50 each because all work groups within MoDOT reduced the total workers' compensation claims by 25 percent or more compared to the same six-month period in the previous year.

The total number of employees statewide who received the cash award was 1,234. The statewide savings from the reduction in workers' compensation costs was \$783,886 with the total payouts to employees totaling \$260,330. That resulted in a net savings to MoDOT of \$523,556.

Salaried employees in good standing with the following job titles were eligible: maintenance workers; signal, lighting, signing and striping employees; bridge maintenance; motorist assist; direct field supervisors of the above titles; and superintendents managing the above titles.

#### for more info

Community Relations Manager  
Phone  
E-mail

Lori Marble  
417.629.3329  
lori.marble@modot.mo.gov

3901 E. 32nd Street  
Joplin, MO 64804

### Pro Cyclists Race Through District 7

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

On Aug. 12, 115 professional cyclists from around the world raced through St. Clair and Cedar counties on their way to Springfield from Clinton as part of the inaugural Tour of Missouri bicycle race.

MoDOT crews in both counties worked long and hard to make sure their areas were mowed, cleaned up and that dead animals were cleared away.

"There were a lot of details to look after

in getting the road-sides ready for the race," said Stockton Maintenance Supervisor Russell Hogan. "I was amazed at the number of people in this area who came to watch the race, and it was great hearing from them how nice the roads and the area looked."



**These 12 cyclists were part of the breakaway group, which was about 20 minutes ahead of the rest of the cyclists when they crossed Stockton Lake dam.**



**The peloton, or main group of racers, as they cross Stockton Lake dam on their way to Springfield.**



# D8

## Springfield Area

### Flash Flood Damage Quickly Repaired

by Angela Eden

Most of the District 8 roads damaged and closed Aug. 20 by flash flooding caused by the remnant of Pacific Ocean Tropical Storm Erin were repaired and reopened to traffic that day.

District Maintenance Engineer Dave O'Connor said workers from across the district came together over the next few days to help, much like the team response after the Jan. 12-15 icestorm.

"Every superintendent had trucks in the (hardest hit) area, hauling materials," O'Connor said of the flood response.

The rainstorm especially hammered northern Greene, southern Polk, Dallas and Laclede counties, dumping 10 to 12 inches of rain in a six hour period, the



Plad Maintenance Supervisor Deryle Potter on Greene County Route BB



Walnut Grove Senior Maintenance Worker Dwaine Bourke on Greene County Route JJ



Laclede County Route N



Polk County Route KK

National Weather Service reported. An unofficial estimate put the total at up to 15 inches in places.

Rushing water damaged more than a dozen two-lane roadways crossing low-lying areas. Those locations included a 380-foot long washout on Polk County Route KK at Sycamore Branch northwest of Pleasant Hope and a 12-foot deep hole on Laclede County Route N east of Lebanon where two metal drain pipes were pushed downstream.

Bolivar-Buffalo area Maintenance Superintendent Dan Ream said crews put in extra hours to reopen roads and restore two-way traffic by week's end. Scoured-out roadsides were filled with rock that week. Shoulder and drainage area repairs took another two weeks.

"We were pretty fortunate with pavement," Ream said, except for Route KK.

On Route KK, Bolivar area crews worked late into the evening Aug. 20 to place enough base rock to allow drivers to travel over the washed out area. Several lengths of swept-away pavement wound up in a field next to the roadway. During the week of Aug. 27, Route KK was shut down for three days so a contractor could lay new asphalt pavement.

On Route N the week of Sept. 10, Lebanon area crews installed a new 17-by-10 foot concrete box culvert. The work, requiring a crane, could not start until a utility company de-energized overhead electrical lines.

Shoulders were damaged on Laclede County Route BB near Dove and an entrance was washed out on Laclede County Route K northwest of Falcon, Lebanon-Marshfield area Maintenance Superintendent Kenny Lietch said. Crews quickly made repairs.

Water rose enough that it temporarily covered lanes and caused short-term closures on Interstate 44 near the Gasconade River east of Lebanon and Route 13 near the Polk/Greene County line.

O'Connor said repairs from the Aug. 20 rainstorm will exceed \$365,000.



### D8 at Work

Chip-seals are being done on 221 miles of roads. Among crew members working on Route 125 north of Rueter (top photo) are Ozark Senior Maintenance Workers David Guerin, left, and Dewayne Coffey, right, along with Rueter Maintenance Supervisor Charlie Peterson.

Performing a pre-trip safety inspection in a loader (middle photo) is Right-of-Way Assistant Manager Becky Goad, with Mechanic Supervisor Larry Lay as judge. This was part of a Winter Skills Training session at the District Office complex for nearly 300 employees who plow snow.

District Engineer Kirk Juranas is interviewed by KSMU reporter Missy Shelton (bottom photo) underneath the Route 125/James River bridge. This was for a nationwide National Public Radio story on MoDOT's pioneering Safe & Sound initiative to upgrade 802 bridges in five years.



### Materials Veteran Retires

by Angela Eden

#### Senior Materials Inspector Jim Preuss

Service: 26 years (1966-72; 1987-07)

Career: aggregate inspector, Kansas City, 1966-72; aggregate inspector, Kansas City, 1987; bituminous plant inspector, Kansas City, 1994; aggregate supervisor, St. Joseph, 1995; senior materials inspector, Springfield, 2000

Memorable Work: Building a rapport with contractors, making sure MoDOT and taxpayers got what they paid for

Quote: "I've worked in three different districts and I've made a lot of friends with MoDOT employees and with contractors."

Post-MoDOT Plans: Traveling with wife, Cherie; spending time at their grandkids' ball games



Preuss

Also retiring October 1, Drew Senior Maintenance Worker Ken Massey.

"Talkin' Transportation" Call-In Radio Show

KWTO 560 AM, Springfield

10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays

radiospringfield.com

### for more info

Community Relations Manager  
Phone  
E-mail

3025 E. Kearney  
P.O. Box 868  
Springfield, MO 65801

Bob Edwards  
417.895.7713  
robert.edwards@modot.mo.gov



# D9

## South Central

### Schroyer Family Recognized by Missouri Farm Bureau Leadership Displayed at Work Carries Over Into Community Involvement

MoDOT Maintenance Superintendent Charlie Schroyer and family traveled to the Missouri State Fair Aug. 13 to be recognized as the 2007 State Fair Farm Family of the Year for Crawford County. Families from 109 of Missouri's 114 counties were recognized. The event is co-sponsored by the Missouri Farm Bureau, Missouri State Fair, Missouri Department of Agriculture, University of Missouri Extension and the University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources.

Charlie, wife Kathy and children Ethan and Olivia, participated in the 49th State Fair Family Farm Day events Aug. 13, including a dinner held for all farm families. While at the fair, they were joined by the other farm families, all of whom were selected based on the following criteria:

- Active engagement in agricultural activities and partnership with the University of Missouri Extension and College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources for programming and technical assistance
- Active supporter of and cooperation with the University of Missouri Extension
- Active community involvement and assuming leadership roles in groups such as church, school and farm organizations
- Having children actively involved, past or present, in 4-H, FFA or other youth organizations.

- Respect among neighbors and community

South Central Maintenance Engineer Henry Haggard said he values recognition of MoDOT employees by outside

sources. "This honor is a special one for Charlie and his family," he said. "It just goes to show we have a good group of employees who are making an impact on the communities they live in."



**MoDOT Maintenance Superintendent Charlie Schroyer wife Kathy and children, Ethan and Olivia recently were selected as the State Fair Farm Family of the Year for Crawford County. The honor is awarded to one family in each Missouri county annually. Pictured, from left: Missouri State Fair Commissioners Jerry Divin, Elizabeth Schlueter and Barbara Hayden, Kathy, Olivia, Charlie and Ethan Schroyer and Commissioners Jerry King, Katie Smith and Jan McElwrath.**

### Communication Rounds and District EAC Launched to Improve Information Flow

The belief that communication is vital to the success of any team has prompted two new initiatives within the South Central District. Both have grown out of employee feedback regarding a need for greater communication and a management team exercise to identify and act on employee "Wows" that will make MoDOT a great place to work. Each is in keeping with the MoDOT Values of empowering employees, being open and honest and listening to seek and understand.

The first was the introduction of communication rounds during the third quarter. Members of the management team were paired up, assigned to specific areas of the district and challenged with visiting each of the buildings or departments in their area at least once per quarter.

The purpose of the rounds is to offer employees the opportunity to ask questions or bring up topics for which they need additional information. A bonus is the opportunity to share information

on the direction of MoDOT and give specifics on new programs or initiatives.

South Central District Engineer Tom Stehn said these visits belong to the employees. "The agenda is set by the group," he explained. "Any new information is always shared, but the point is to make sure employees are engaged in two-way communication."

The managers will rotate to a new area of the district after one year in their current areas. In addition to creating opportunity to communicate, the rounds also allow all employees to meet the members of the management team and build relationships.

"So far the rounds have gone very well," Tom said. "The feedback we have gathered from employees has helped us understand why some of the perceptions exist and has been very valuable as decisions are being made. I look forward to a lot more good exchange of information."

The second development designed to improve communication is the launch

of a South Central District Employee Advisory Council (EAC). The first meeting of this group is set for late October.

The two representatives who attend the statewide EAC meetings will attend the district meetings along with representatives from each department and maintenance region. The purpose is to provide an avenue for bringing concerns to the table.

"Our representatives have done a good job of interacting with employees in the past but it has always been difficult to gather concerns to be taken to the statewide meeting," Tom said. "Plus, there may be things that need to be looked at within the district and may never make it to the statewide EAC meeting.

This new district EAC will help our representatives and myself gain a better understanding of what concerns are out there and how we can act on them."

Lead by Tom, the only attendees at the meetings will be the representatives selected from each department or maintenance region. They will be conducted on a quarterly basis and the minutes will be shared with all employees. South Central District Representatives Kim Hilburn and Jonathan Estes will then be responsible for communicating items that need to be passed on to the state level during those meetings.

"I am pleased with the implementation of these two new avenues for improving communication," Tom said. "I know great things will come from each of them."

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#### for more info

Community Relations Manager  
Phone  
E-mail  
  
910 Old Springfield Road  
P.O. Box 220  
Willow Springs, MO 65793

Ann Marie Newberry  
417.469.6203  
ann.newberry@modot.mo.gov



**Frank Miller, a member of U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson's staff, visited the South Central District Aug. 28. While here, Miller toured projects along Routes 60 and 63. He is pictured above with Construction Engineer Ed Hess (right), while discussing the recently completed Route 63/Business 60 Intersection near Cabool.**



# D10

## Southeast

## Area Students Get the Message Out: Buckle-Up!



Prior to the 2007-2008 school year, two Sikeston High School students painted 16 “Buckle-Up” stencils at Sikeston area school parking lots. In addition, the students also installed “Buckle-Up” signs in the school parking lots this summer. Similar efforts are currently taking place at other Southeast high schools, including Dexter and Bell City.

## District 10 Participates in State Fair Events



Employees from the Southeast District recently attended the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia to staff the Highway Gardens.



In an effort to inform the public of some of the major projects in the Southeast region, District 10 provided an informative table-top display during the State Fair.

### for more info

Community Relations Manager Angie Wilson  
Phone 573.472.6632  
E-mail angela.wilson@modot.mo.gov  
  
2675 N. Main Street  
P.O. Box 160  
Sikeston, MO 63801

## Governor Signs Bridge Bill in Southeast District Safe & Sound in D10

Gov. Matt Blunt recently visited an aging bridge in Stoddard County to sign House Bill 2, enabling the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program to move forward. The governor visited the 85-year-old bridge on Route 114 located just outside of Dexter on Sept. 6.

The Route 114 Bridge is one of the 24 bridges in Stoddard County included in the Safe & Sound program. Stoddard County has more bridges in the program than any other county in Southeast Missouri.



While in District 10, Gov. Matt Blunt signed House Bill 2 to move the *Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program* forward.

### House Bill 2

House Bill 2 is the result of a special legislative session that ended just days before the governor’s visit to Dexter. House Bill 2 addresses the need to improve and replace hundreds of Missouri bridges by allowing contractors to access the bonds needed for the projects.

The bonds will help protect taxpayers by ensuring the contractors who fix and replace the bridges complete the work. Without this change, no contractors would have been able to obtain the required bonds, which would have stopped the program from moving forward.

### Safe & Sound

With the tragedy in Minnesota spotlighting the fact that many of the nation’s bridges are structurally deficient, the one solace is that Missouri is perched somewhat ahead of the crisis with the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program.

The Southeast District has 83 bridges included in the Safe & Sound program, with the bulk in Stoddard, Scott and Cape Girardeau counties.

“The great news is construction could get started on some of our worst bridges by next year,” said District Engineer Mark Shelton. “And we’ll be able to make needed improvements and do so without a tax increase or additional funding.”

Shelton says the program will not oc-

cur without a cost; however, work on the bridges must be done in the most economical way possible. Just as we are increasing our practice of road closures during bridge replacements, it is ex-

pected that the Safe & Sound program will result in road closures as well.

“District 10 is committed to working with citizens to schedule work during times with minimal impacts to communities, but the inconvenience of road closures may not be avoidable with this initiative,” said Shelton.

### Bridge Inspections

The week of Aug. 20 was a busy one for bridge inspections in the Southeast District. MoDOT’s specialized team of bridge inspectors from Central Office visited the area, inspecting the Route 51 Chester River Bridge in Perry County and the westbound Business Route 60 structure in downtown Poplar Bluff.

Both structures were among 11 state-wide receiving thorough inspections because of their similarity in design to the I-35W Bridge in Minneapolis that collapsed in early August.

“The results of the Chester Bridge inspection show that the structure remains a safe means of travel for motorists. The team found little that they had not already documented in an inspection completed two years ago,” said Shelton.

The inspection did uncover an expansion joint that was improved during the month of September.

Shelton said, “This expansion joint has been on our radar screen and has been repaired a couple times over the 65-year life of the structure.”

The Chester Bridge was last inspected in September 2005.

The inspection team found no changes in the condition of the westbound Business Route 60 structure in downtown Poplar Bluff since the last inspection in March 2006.

## Recent Retiree in D10



Joe Steward re-tired Sept. 1 after 15 years with MoDOT. Steward was the district safety and health manager.



# Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

**Community Relations**  
Missouri Department of Transportation  
P. O. Box 270  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
573.751.2840  
[www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org)  
1-888 ASK MODOT

**Editor**  
Kristi Jamison

**Design Coordinator**  
Dennis Forbis

## Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Kristi Jamison, editor  
573.526.2482  
[Kristine.Jamison@modot.mo.gov](mailto:Kristine.Jamison@modot.mo.gov)

Additional copies are available upon request. Suggestions, questions and comments are always welcome.



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## Mission

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Community Relations  
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# One Online Map Fits All

Travelers now have a one-stop online location for information on Missouri road conditions and work zones. Whether they're looking for weather-related information, road construction, flooding or incidents on major routes, drivers can go to [www.maps.modot.mo.gov/travelerinformation](http://www.maps.modot.mo.gov/travelerinformation) and find out what lies on the road ahead of them.

The map will replace two separate maps currently on MoDOT's Web site, making it easier and quicker for the public to get the information they're after.

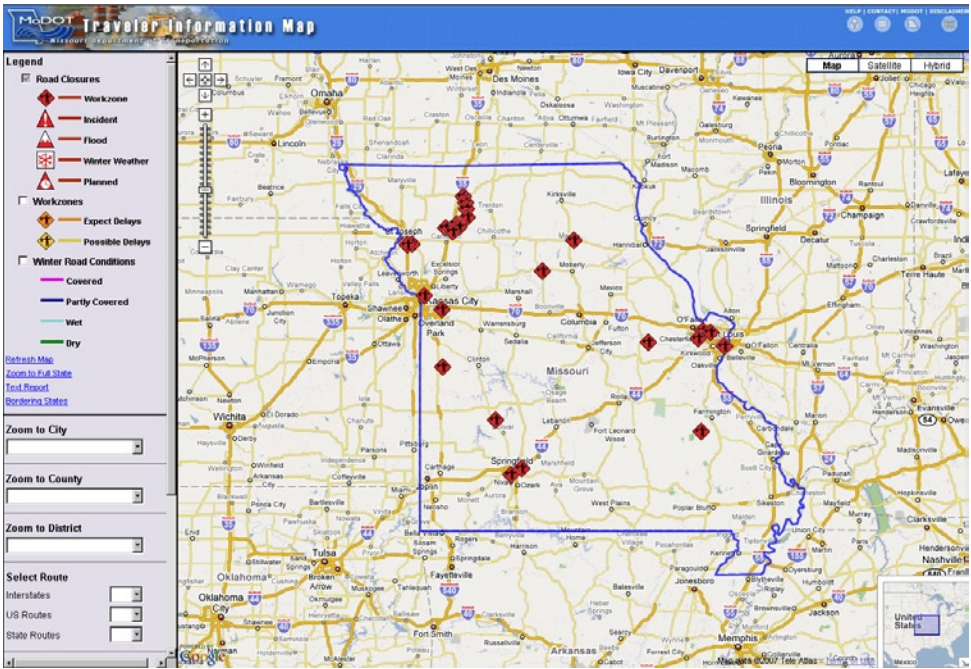
"We previously had one map for work zones and another map for road conditions," said Matt Hiebert, MoDOT's web content manager. "They worked very differently and some people seemed confused on which one to visit. Now they only have to go to one Web

address to get all the information they need to plan their trip."

Not only does the consolidation of information benefit the public, new road information will now be available to them.

In the past, flooding closures had to be offered in a text format because the Road Conditions map could not zoom in to show such specific detail. Short stretches of flooded road simply didn't appear on the map because of the statewide scale.

The new map allows visitors to zoom in and view color-coded segments of road that are flooded. In winter months, the segments will designate severity of snow and ice coverage.

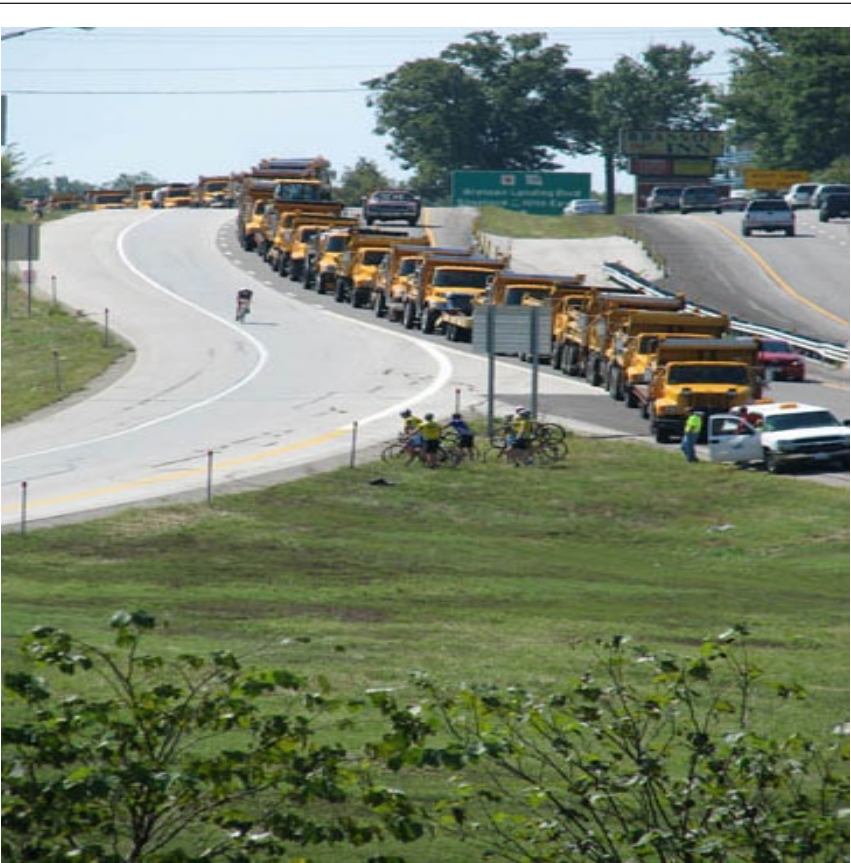


"Work Zone information is also available on the map," Hiebert said. "Icons range in color from yellow to red to designate the extent of the delay. Yellow means a possible delay. Orange means to expect a delay. Red means the road is closed."

Another new layer of information will be incident notifications, something never offered by previous maps.

"Incidents can be a lot of different things," said Hiebert. "It could be a crash, debris on the road or pavement damage. It could also be a parade or other planned event that requires a segment to close."

Incidents will only be designated on major routes and interstates since those are the roads under MoDOT oversight.



Many Tour of Missouri cyclists and fans were impressed with MoDOT's 73-truck barricade that lined Route 65 to protect racers.

"Another cool thing about the time trial was the impressive "traffic wall" that the Missouri Department of Transportation put up to protect us on the stretch where we rode on the interstate. They used probably every MoDOT vehicle in the state to form a huge line of trucks that sealed off one lane for us. It was really quite a sight." - Chris Wherry, Competitor

## Safe & Sound

Continued from page 1

Bridge Project will touch every county in Missouri, but I am particularly pleased that our rural communities will see improvements to their bridges. As we have focused on improving our roads, our bridges have fallen behind and this innovative program will bring positive results for our communities by making our bridges easier to travel and safer for Missourians and visitors to our state."

"With this innovative new approach to transportation we will do in five years what would have taken us 20 before," Rep. St. Onge said. "We are getting maximum value for taxpayers and keeping the public safe as well."

"I thank Governor Blunt for his leadership on this issue. Bridge improvements are clearly a critical need for Missouri, so we are eager to get started on this ambitious program as soon as possible," said Rahn.

Two teams remain in the running for the job – Missouri Bridge Partners and Team United. Their final proposals are due on Oct. 22, followed by their bid on Nov. 5. It is anticipated that the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission will award a contract at its November meeting in Kansas City and that work will begin in Spring 2008.

For more information, visit [www.modot.mo.gov/safeandsound](http://www.modot.mo.gov/safeandsound).